

CAPSULE SUMMARY

BA-1040

417 Jefferson Avenue

East Towson, Baltimore County

Circa 1880

Private

The twin dwelling at 417 Jefferson Avenue was constructed circa 1900 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19th century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20th century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

This wood frame dwelling sits on a parged foundation, rises two stories in height and is three bays wide. The L-shaped house is clad in square butt wood shingles. The first story of the façade or east elevation features a centered entry with a single-leaf, panel-and-light replacement door and flanking 1/1 vinyl replacement windows. All three openings are set beneath the three-bay wide shed roof porch. The porch is supported by chamfered wood posts and features a metal balustrade. Like the first story, the second story of the façade is pierced by two 1/1 vinyl replacement windows with square-edged wood sills. The house is covered by a cross gable roof with asphalt shingle cladding, above which rises a central interior brick chimney with a slightly corbeled cap.

7. Description

Inventory No. BA- 1040

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Constructed circa 1900, the vernacular dwelling is set on a sloping, grassy lot at 417 Jefferson Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. Set on a parged foundation, the wood frame dwelling rises two stories in height and is three bays wide. The L-shaped house is clad in square butt wood shingles. The first story of the façade or east elevation features a centered entry with a single-leaf, panel-and-light replacement door and flanking 1/1 vinyl replacement windows. All three openings are set beneath the three-bay wide shed roof porch. The porch is supported by chamfered wood posts and features a metal balustrade. Like the first story, the second story of the façade is pierced by two 1/1 vinyl replacement windows with square-edged wood sills. The house is covered by a cross gable roof with asphalt shingle cladding, above which rises a central interior brick chimney with a slightly corbeled cap.

To the rear of the dwelling, there is a 1970s prefabricated metal shed with a front-gabled roof.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-1040

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates	1900 ca.	Architect/Builder	Unknown
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Construction dates	1900 ca.
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Evaluation for:

☐ National Register☐ Maryland Register☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Located at 417 Jefferson Avenue in East Towson, the vernacular dwelling was constructed circa 1900. East Towson is significant as a pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19th century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20th century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-1040

- Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland*. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.
Baltimore County Historic Inventory.
Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County*. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.
Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.
Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men*. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.
Sidney, J. C. *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys*. Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property .10 Acre
Acreage of historical setting Unknown
Quadrangle name Towson Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The house is located at 417 Jefferson Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been associated with Tax Map 70A, Parcel 438 since its construction circa 1900.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	R. Weidlich and K. Baynard, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	November 1, 2001
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

East Towson: Planimetric Data



BA #: 1040
Name: House, 417 Jefferson Avenue
East Towson
Baltimore County



Prepared by:
Baltimore County Office of Planning
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204
June, 2001



Scale
1 inch = 200 feet
1:2400
100 0 100 200 Feet

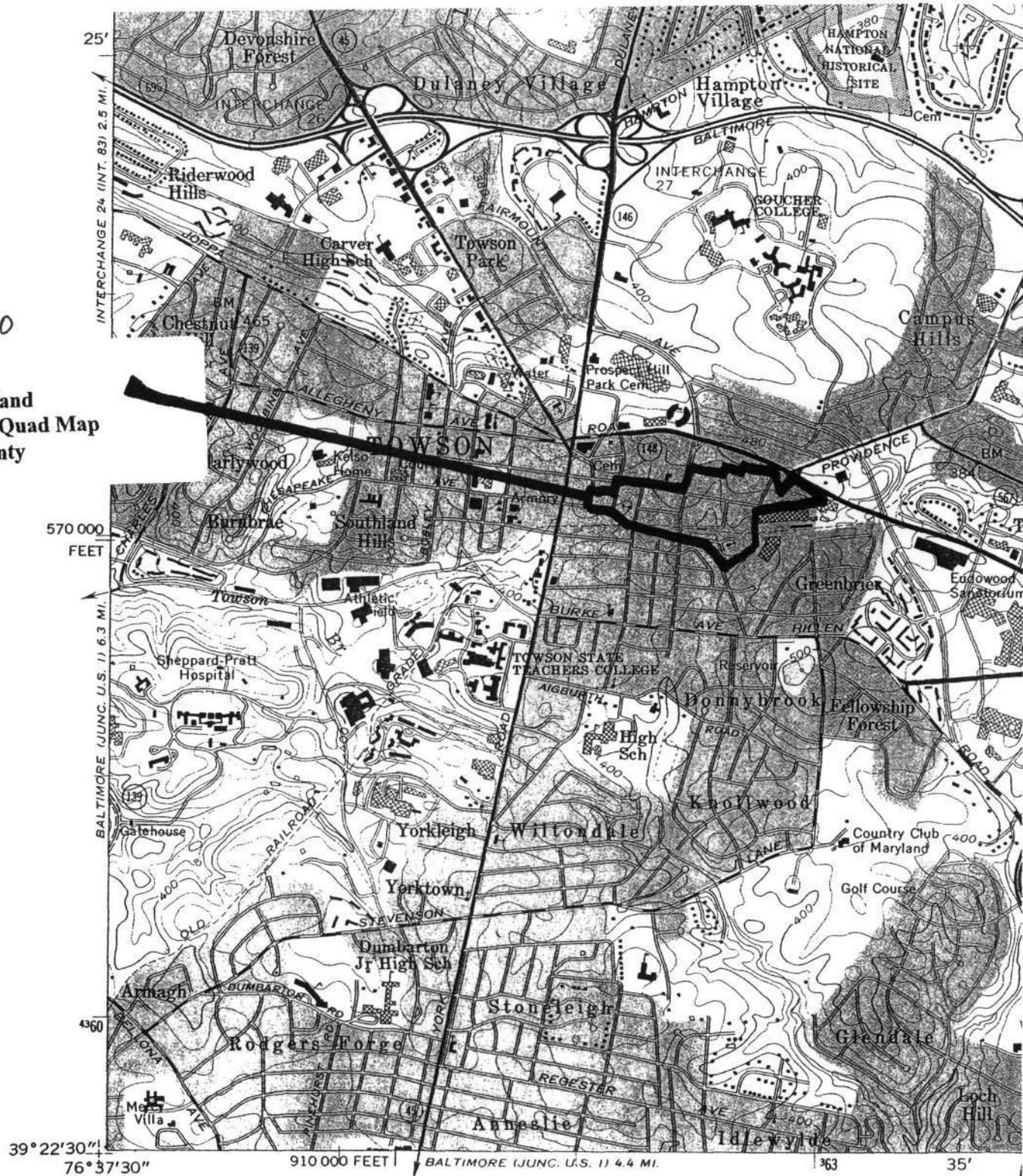
Legend

Paved Roads	Study Area Boundary	Hydrographic Features
Unpaved Roads	Buildings	Vegetation
Paved Parking / Driveways		

Data Sources:
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)
Coordinate System:
Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum
Elevations in Feet: NAVD83 Vertical Datum
Date of Data Capture: March 1996
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'

BA-1040

East Towson
Towson, Maryland
Towson USGS Quad Map
Baltimore County



(BALTIMORE WEST)
5662' SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland
Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

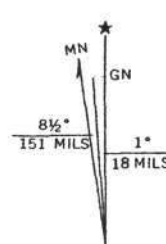
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from
aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information not
field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



BA-1040

417 JEFFERSON AVENUE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD
EHT TRACERIES

10/2001

MD SHPO

SOUTHEAST CORNER LOOKING WEST

1 OF 3



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417 JEFFERSON AVENUE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

10/2001

MD SHPO

NORTHEAST CORNER LOOKING SOUTH

2 OF 3



BA-1040

417 JEFFERSON AVENUE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

EHT TRACERIES

10/2001

MD SHPO

NORTHWEST CORNER LOOKING SOUTHEAST

3 OF 3

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

THE WALKER HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

417 Jefferson Ave.

second

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md.

VICINITY OF

Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☐ BUILDING(S)
☒ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☐ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSEUM
☐ PARK
☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME William/Robert Walker

Telephone #: 8287834

STREET & NUMBER

417 Jefferson Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #: 3422:299

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

BA-1040 - 417 Jefferson

before 1898

The front section of this two-story frame house consists of two rooms with a stair and fireplace along the central wall. This part is three bays wide by one bay deep. A porch covers the front three bays. This section is followed by a two-story kitchen to the rear.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

 DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

417 Jefferson

This house appears on an 1898 map as the dwelling of H. L. Bowen. The two-story frame structure is covered with brown wooden shingles. The main block is one bay deep by three bays wide. A central door is flanked by two 6/6 windows and two windows are positioned above these on the second floor. The gable roof parallels the street. The porch's shed roof is supported by square chamfered posts. The house is supported by a stone foundation. A two-story kitchen wing running to the west from the southwest end rests on a concrete foundation.

The floor plan consists of two rooms split by the winding stair, which is entered at the northwest corner of the south room. The chimney block, which no longer has its mantelpiece, backs up to the stairway in the southwest corner of the north room. The west wall is lit by a 6/6 window on each floor.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

BA-10410

PERIOD**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Early records of ownership indicate that Henry L. Bowen owned this property in 1898. Henry Bowen was instrumental in the development of the Odd Fellows Hall and the African Union Methodist Church. Bowen controlled the property for a period after 1898, after which time it was conveyed to a number of people with Lilian Daniels purchasing the property in 1957 and subsequently conveying the property to William Walker.

The Bowen house represents the relationship between some of the "liberal" white people in the Towson community. Henry L. Bowen played a major role in the commencement-start of the African Union Methodist Church in 1881.

Land Records of Baltimore County Liber Folio 2008-515.
3422-299

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marcus Pollock/coordinator Merry Stinson/architect 7/77

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save E. Towson/Towson Ymca

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Ave.

823-8870

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

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RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



BA-1040
Walker House
417 Jefferson Ave.
Towson, Md.
east

Merry Stinson
1977